

# Compressed Culture

Why is it that sophisticated Americans ask for and receive all manner of shortcuts, compressions, selections, anthologies, condensations and outlines when we go in search for knowledge? Why are we seldom satisfied with what a writer says or the way he says it, but must seek out what someone else thinks about what the author said, in a streamlined, cut down, shortened and inevitably weakened way?

Perhaps we as a nation are becoming intellectually soft. We have come to expect our culture to be served to us on a foreshortened platter. So accustomed have we become to technological shortcuts that we feel an attempt to educate us must be equally quick, fast, and easy as a do-it-yourself kit.

What is the use of reading a novel when the Reader's Digest will give you a version that can be read during the television commercials? Why torture yourself by wading through War and Peace or Das Kapital when any number of learned gentlemen will explain what these folks meant to say, without all the fuss of actual reading? We find that anyone can learn to speak French or play the piano or become an irresistible salesman if one has ten dollars and is willing to study one hour a day for three weeks. We must be objective and thoughtful and slow to make up our minds. It might well be that our craving for the easy way is not so bad after all. After all, it certainly is good that people want knowledge in any form, even if they do want it in three easy, painless installments.

It could be that this is the way to wean people away from their television sets. TV isn't too good in the summer anyway.

# Education's Cure . . .

Currently there is a drastic shortage of properly prepared teachers in public schools. What are its causes? This question is of major concern to professional educators and the public alike.

Dr. Wesley C. Meierhenry, Coordinator of the Teacher Placement Division has cited as causes for the shortage a low number of college graduates now because of fewer births than ordinarily during the depression and the unfavorable publicity given the "difficulties and drawbacks of teaching." This publicity, he said, caused college people to go into more lucrative fields.

What is needed to cure the teacher shortage is a rise in public esteem of the intellectual quality of the teaching profession. How can this be brought about? Three measures would help quite a bit.

The first is a modification of teacher certification standards to include a requisite number of credit hours in the subject or subjects which a prospective teacher proposes to teach. The initial certificate would then be issued for a minimum number of academic hours, including, of course, the required hours in education courses. The advanced certificate would be issued upon completion of a stated number of hours in the subject beyond that required for the initial certificate.

The second measure is a reorganization of teacher training. This would involve elevating teachers colleges to the level of other professional colleges.

Under this plan, prospective teachers would take their first two years of preparation in the colleges of liberal arts and sciences and their last two or three college years in colleges of education. They would, of course, continue study in their teaching fields.

The third measure is a codification by state legislatures of the minimum curricular offerings of public schools. Such legislation would state definitely which subjects are basic and which are secondary. The law would necessarily provide for standard examinations in these subjects and thereby set certain standards which today are lacking.

These three measures along with others would tend to raise the intellectual quality of the teaching profession and therefore attract more college graduates into it, thus alleviating the teacher shortage. R.W.

"I would rather have men ask why I have no statue than why I have one"—Marcus Cato.

"If misery loves company, misery has company enough"—Henry David Thoreau.

"Candy Is Dandy But, Liquor Is quicker"—Ogden Nash.

"I would rather be first man here than the second in Rome"—Julius Caesar.

"Be sure you are right, then go ahead"—Davy Crockett.

## The Summer Nebraskan

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### LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS

by Dick Bibler



"I'm sorry Comstock, but you've flunked English B, because we don't have a large enough student enrollment for the fall term".

## The Changing Role Reading Instruction Expands In Scope

By KAY NOSKY

With relatively new ideas, such as Air Age, correspondence study and community projects, being introduced into education, the good old Three R's should not be forgotten. But

even the teaching of reading has taken on a new aspect these days.

A workshop seminar at the University is devoted to finding instructional methods and materials for helping high school students improve their reading abilities. High school students? One would think they should have learned how to read in the grades.

The truth is that many students do not learn how to read in the grades — and not necessarily because of poor teachers. The reasons are many and are sometimes so complicated as to require extensive diagnosis. Educators, therefore, found the need for reading instruction on the secondary levels and the big push for instruction in high schools came five or ten years ago. However, not much has been done in Nebraska until this summer.

The Cooperative School Study Council, realizing the importance of reading instruction, asked the University to set up a workshop. Teaching the workshop is Dr. Gertrude Stearns, associate director of the High School and College Reading Center at Boston University. Thirteen teachers and administrators are enrolled.

Teaching reading in high school is different from teaching reading in the grades. However, in the clinic at Boston University, many cases are so bad that a return to grade school methods is sometimes required. The purpose of this seminar is to show teachers how to help all students, even good ones to read better.

Speed in reading is an important factor, but only one of many. Comprehension of that which is read, of course, is the final goal. Those in the workshop are becoming familiar with the full meanings of such terms as comprehension

skills, study skills and organizational skills.

The workshop students are also investigating the uses and desirability of certain machines which are sometimes used in teaching reading. One of these, for example, the tachistoscope, flashes words and phrases on a screen with length of exposure varying from one to 1-100 of a second.

Teaching reading in high schools is an extremely important field which seems to have been overlooked until relatively recently. It would be a wonderful thing if this summer's seminar was a step toward a more organized program in the high schools.



Courtesy Sunday Journal & Star

## From— The Editor's Desk

Probably everyone is aware that Nebraska has been well represented in "pulchritudinous" contests over the past few weeks and that Donna Jo Strever of Grand Island placed third in the Miss USA contest, but I wonder how many persons are aware of the fact that this particular Miss Nebraska used to baby sit with yours truly . . . And to think I was so young . . .

Mrs. Strever's younger sister recently was named Miss Colorado in the Miss America judging in Denver. For Sharon's talent exposition she gave the reading "The Murder of Leidice" which concerns Nazi terrorism and the sadistic annihilation of a small village during World War II. You might say that a rather paradoxical combination of "Beauty and the Beasts" boosted her into the winner's circle.

A proud editor, if there are such things, never should apologize for the content of his publication. The timely coverage on the "baring of the knees" is being featured in this week's issue because of its worldwide importance and has nothing to do with the anti-climactical goings on around the campus as the 1955 Summer Session draws to a close.

For those who are contemplating being commissioned in the U.S. Army as second lieutenants at some future date, I would like to quote a release concerning a forthcoming movie concerning the war experiences of cinematographer Audie Murphy. "A second lieutenant was the first guy I ever saw killed. It seemed second lieutenants always got it first." Murphy was commissioned on the battle field after his platoon lost four lieutenants.

In closing, I would like to say that contrary to general knowledge and laws of just desert, I have been paid for editing the 1955 Summer Nebraskan. Applications are now being taken for the 1956 editorship. Good-bye now.

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